

Ad Hoc Sign Bylaw Review Committee Meeting
April 11, 2012 – 7:30 pm
2nd Floor Conference Room, Town Hall

Attending:

Members: Jeff Cohen, Karen Kenney, Lisa Mustapich, Mark Siegenthaler, Ralph Zazula

Others: Chris Laskey-Code Enforcement Liaison

Absent: John McCulloch, Kevin Latady

7:35 – Meeting called to order.

Jeff reported that the ZBA recently granted a modification to the special permit for illumination of signs at CVS. The modification allowed the sign facing Great Road to be illuminated between 11 pm and 6 am.

The Committee returned to its previous discussion of illumination after 11 pm for establishments that are open for business. Discussion included the potential to return to the original language, use language from the Concord bylaws and/or variations striking parts of the existing Bedford language.

The Committee concluded with a proposal to alter the current section, striking the word “normally” and the last sentence, to read as follows:

40.5 ILLUMINATION

SECTION 3. HOURS

No sign shall be illuminated between the hours of 11:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M.

A Special Permit from the Board of Appeals may be granted to allow illumination at establishments that are open to the public during those hours, and requirements of Section 1, Overspill, are met.

Discussion turned to the constitutionality of regulating political signs and a possible definition change to include them as temporary, non-commercial signs.

Members discussed use of Google docs, access issues and availability. It was agreed that distribution of materials would be made through email attachments as well as postings.

Members discussed the need to continue reviewing other community bylaws. Suggested sources include Concord, Hingham, Lexington, Marshfield, Reading and Scituate. Jeff offered to begin developing a table similar to one in Hingham’s bylaw that organizes the sign standards by district location.

Chris relayed a recent issue regarding a business that wanted to fly a flag at their site that was not allowed under the current bylaw. There was discussion of the potential for later the section (40.4 GENERAL REGULATIONS, Section 3. Business Zones, H. Flags) To eliminate the last sentence, change the word “limited” to “related” or otherwise reduce the strict definition currently in the section to allow flags other than those specified.

This led to discussion of flags that indicate an establishment is open for business. The members considered whether a definition could be added to 40.6 SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS to include Open for Business Flags such that were defined and regulated but required to be permitted by the Building Inspector.

There was brief discussion of barber poles and the current language regulating them.

Karen reported that business community reaction to the potential setting real estate sign standards based on the zone in which they are located, was generally positive. It was noted that bylaws from other communities generally do this.

Ralph volunteered to post the current bylaw on Google docs; Lisa volunteered to create a track changes version in Word.

9:29 – Meeting adjourned. Mustapich moved; Zazula seconded. Voted 6-0

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Siegenthaler